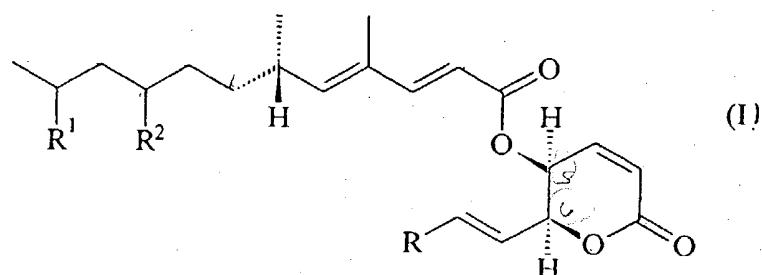


CLAIMS

1. A 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone of formula (I)

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wherein R is CO₂H or CH₃, and each of R¹ and R² is H; or R is CO₂H, one of R¹ and R² is H and the other is OH; or, when R is CO₂H, a pharmaceutically or veterinarilly acceptable salt

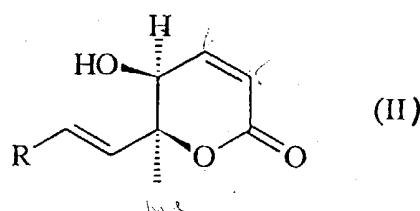
15 thereof.

2. A process for the preparation of a 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone of formula (I) as defined in claim 1 or a pharmaceutically or veterinarilly acceptable salt thereof, which process comprises:

- 20 (i) fermenting, in a source of carbon, nitrogen and inorganic salts, fungal strain *Phomopsis* sp. 22502 (CBS 313.96) or a mutant thereof which produces a said 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone;
- (ii) isolating a said 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone from the fermentation broth; and
- 25 (iii) if desired when the isolated said 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone is the compound of formula (I) wherein R is CO₂H, converting the said 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone into a pharmaceutically or veterinarilly acceptable salt thereof.

3. A process for the preparation of a 5,6-dihydro- α -pyrone of formula (I), as defined in claim 1, wherein R is CH₃, which process comprises esterifying the phomalactone of formula (II):

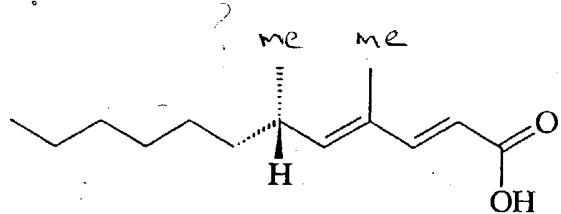
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with a fatty acid of formula (IIIa):

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~~CP~~
MF

$C_{14} H_{24} O_2$

4. A pharmaceutical or veterinary composition

20 comprising a pharmaceutically or veterinarily acceptable carrier or diluent and, as active ingredient, a compound as claimed in claim 1.

5. A compound according to claim 1 for use in a method of treatment of the human or animal body by therapy.

25 6. A compound according to claim 5 for use as a cytokine production inhibitor.

7. A compound according to claim 6 for use as an IL-1 production inhibitor.

8. A compound according to claim 6 for use in the